

## Uncle Dick's Pictures.

"You can't guess who got into my room last night!" said Uncle Dick, at the breakfast-table, one cold winter morning.

"Was it a burglar?" asked Margery, looking up from her oatmeal with great interest. "Did you see him?"

"No," said Uncle Dick, "I didn't see him nor hear him, either, and he wasn't a burglar, for he did not carry off a thing. Instead of that he left me a surprise."

"A nice one?" asked Margery.

"Yes, indeed! Four beautiful pictures! One is a picture of a wood. The trees seem to be all fir, with sharp tops and long, feathery branches. Some of them are leaning over, and there is so much underbrush that I'm sure I never could scramble through. Here and there I saw a dead tree or a great boulder, and high over the tree-tops there is a flock of birds.

"Another is a picture of a brook, all smooth and still, and a pretty little bridge; but the bridge looks so light and frail that I guess only fairies could walk over it.

"The third picture is the finest city you ever saw, with slender spires and beautiful carved towers rising up to the sky.

"But the other picture is the best of all. It is a lovely garden, full of dainty white flowers shaped like little stars; and there are long ferns."

"O, Uncle Dick, do let me see 'em!" said Margery.

"Where are they?"

"Right on my four window panes," said Uncle Dick. "But perhaps they are gone now, for they were fading fast when I came down to breakfast."

"What a pity!" said Margery.

"Never mind," said Uncle Dick. "There will be four more to-morrow morning if this cold weather lasts."

"But who brought them?" asked Margery, looking puzzled.

"Jack Frost," said Uncle Dick, laughing.—Exchange.

## When Emily Was Caught.

One cold, snowy day, when Emily got home from school, she stopped at the gate to lick off some of the soft, white snow from the top of the iron fence. What do you think happened? Why, her wet tongue froze fast to the fence, and she couldn't get it off!

This frightened her so that she began to cry. Then she tried to call to her mother in the house, but she found she could not speak without her tongue. She could only make queer noises that frightened her more than ever. It was getting dark, and nobody seemed to be passing that way. Poor Emily began to think she would have to stay out there all night and be frozen to death.

Just at that moment the front door opened and mother herself stepped out, looking anxiously up the street. When she saw Emily at the gate, waving her arms so wildly and making such strange noises, she flew to see what it all meant. She laughed so merrily at the funny sight that Emily tried to laugh, too, and it wasn't many minutes after that before a cup of warm water had set the prisoner free.—Sunbeam.

## A Boy's Religion.

The late Henry Drummond said to a company of boys: "Boys, if you are going to be Christians, be Christians as boys, and not as your grandmothers. A grandmother has to be a Christian as a grandmother, and that is the right and beautiful thing for her; but if you cannot read your Bible by the hour as your grandmother can, or delight in meetings as she can, don't think that you are necessarily a bad boy. When you are your grandmother's age you will have your grandmother's religion."

Now, there is a great deal in the above for a boy to take to heart, for some boys have the idea that they will be expected to put aside most of their propensities if they take upon themselves the duties of Christian boys. This is a mistake. No one expects, no one wants them to give up the natural rights and feelings of boyhood. They are not to be in the least grandmotherly or grandfatherly, but they are to be happy in the way that God intended all youth should be happy.

One of the truest-hearted Christian boys I know is also the merriest. No one would think of calling him "grandmotherly." He reads his Bible, too, and goes regularly to church, to Sunday-school, and to prayer meeting.—Ex.

## Half-Way Town.

An easy road runs smoothly down  
To Half-Way Town;  
For everything that's but begun,  
And everything that's never done,  
Just rolls aside and, one by one,  
Goes into Half-Way Town.

Half-finished walls are tumbling down  
In Half-Way Town.  
Half-finished streets are always lined  
With half-done work of every kind;  
And all the world just lags behind  
In dreary Half-Way Town.

Keep straight along, and don't look down  
Toward Half-Way Town.  
They say, if every one should try,  
To keep on moving, brisk and spry,  
We should discover, by and by,  
There'd be no Half-Way Town.

—Exchange.

## The Young People

## Daily Bible Readings.

Monday, March 3.—Acts 26: 1-23. Paul's defense before King Agrippa. Compare Acts 23: 1f.

Tuesday, March 4.—Acts 26: 24-27: 8. Paul cleared himself (vs. 30). Compare Acts 23: 29.

Wednesday, March 5.—Acts 27: 9-26. Paul's faith and good cheer in the storm (vs. 23). Compare Acts 23: 11.

Thursday, March 6.—Acts 27: 27-44. Paul's counsel saves crew and passengers (vs. 31). Compare Acts 27: 24-26.

Friday, March 7.—Acts 28: 1-16. Paul cures and heals. Compare Mark 5: 22, 23, 41.

Saturday, March 8.—Acts 28: 17-29. Paul in bonds preaching Jesus (vs. 23). Compare Acts 23: 11.

This week closes the study of "Initial truths," as conducted by Rev. G. R. White. I am sure all will be glad to concede that the initial truths treated by him in the month's lessons have a fuller meaning for all who have carefully followed the study.

We extend to him our sincere thanks for his careful and scholarly articles, and hope we may be privileged to "sit at his feet again."

The study for the month of March is to be conducted by Rev. Dr. Trotter, on the subject, "The Christian as a Son of God." All will anticipate with pleasure the study for March.

## Prayer Meeting Topic—March 2.

The joy of service. Ps. 126: 5, 6; Matt. 25: 19-23.

One of the great poets declared that "man was made to mourn," but the teaching of the word makes it clear that he was called into being for the purpose of serving. Service, therefore, becomes his native element, and *service* happiness consists in being in harmony with environment; service becomes his joy. The ideal man found his chief delight in service. "I am among you as one that serveth." The most discontented among men, the chronic grumbler and the censorious critic, are either strangers to service or they attempt that which is impossible, the serving of God and man.

The Psalmist (126: 5, 6) emphasizes the joy which results from labor. He not only encourages to faithfulness in the face of difficulties, but assures us that God's laborer shall enjoy the work of his hands. While in some cases one shall sow and another reap, yet in all cases every man "shall receive his own reward according to his own labor."

But Jesus not only taught that joy came as a reward of service, but that service is itself joy. (Matt. 25: 21, 23.) The faithful servants were rewarded not by sinucures but by larger service. When their sphere of usefulness was enlarged it was with the words, "enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

## "Thy love"

Shall chant its own beatitudes.  
After its own heart working. A child's kiss  
Set on thy signing lips, shall make thee glad;  
A poor man served by thee, shall make thee rich;  
A sick man, helped by thee, shall make thee strong;  
Thou shalt be served thyself by every sense  
Of service which thou renderest.

Let the members of the B. Y. P. U. note:

1. That the joy of service is withheld from none.  
2. That no service is beneath their dignity. The greatest is he that serveth.

3. That "the joy of the Lord is your strength."

Frederickton, N. B. J. H. MACDONALD.

## Initial Truths.

## "ASSURANCE."

## Lesson IV.

Introductory: It is a question of great importance whether one may know, here and now, that his sins are forgiven, and that he is a child of God, an heir of heaven. The Church of Rome, declares the doctrine of Assurance, "a great presumption." The Council of Trent said: "That the believers assurance of the pardon of sin is a vain and ungodly confidence." Cardinal Bellarmine called it, "a prime error of heretics." How could Rome do otherwise and be consistent with her "confessional?" But what saith the Scripture? "To the law and the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." Isa. 8: 20. The doctrine of assurance, in one form or another, is written on almost every page of holy writ. The promises of God are so many divine assurances given to the believer in Christ, whereby he may know his sins forgiven.

## (1) DEFINITION OF ASSURANCE.

The Standard Dictionary gives as the theological meaning of the word assurance: "The full confidence of present personal salvation wrought by the witness of the Holy Spirit in him who believes in Christ." Assurance is subjective in character, and is of the nature of faith. But it differs from faith, in that it is not essential to salvation. For one may be a Christian, an heir of glory, without the joy of assurance in the soul. Assurance is the flower of which faith is the root and the stem. We can have both root and stem without the flower, but not the flower without root and stem. If faith be the hand, then assurance is the diamond ring upon the finger. "Assurance," says one, "is as if the father should show his son the title-deed to his estate, with the son's own name clearly written therein." Assurance is a blessed confidence begotten in the believer by faith in Jesus Christ, as his only Lord and personal Saviour. Col. 2: 2. Heb. 6: 11; 10: 22. Rom. 15: 29. 2 Cor. 1: 10. 2 Peter 3: 13. 1 John 4: 16.

## (2) ASSURANCE ATTAINABLE.

The whole tenor of Scripture bears witness to the fact, that assurance is attainable. Abel, "obtained witness (assurance) that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts." Heb. 11: 4. "Enoch walked with God, and before his translation had this testimony (assurance) that he pleased God." Heb. 11: 5. Noah received a testimony (assurance) of his acceptance: "Thee have I seen righteous before me in this generation." Gen. 7: 1. Abraham was called "the friend of God," which to

him was the assurance that God was leading him. Job said: "I know that my Redeemer liveth." Job 19: 25. Moses spake face to face with God. Ex. 33: 11. David in his psalm gives repeated evidence of his assurance in God. He calls him "My God," "My Light," "My Rock," "My King." When through sin and lack of faithfulness, David, like Bunyan's Pilgrim, lost his "roll" of assurance, he sought it again with great earnestness and heartfelt penitence: "Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation." Ps. 51: 12. Isaiah sings, "Lord I will praise thee though thou wast angry with me, thine anger is turned away and thou comfortedst me." Isa. 12: 1. In the New Testament the saints are described as being filled with the Holy Spirit, and as rejoicing with joy unspeakable and full of glory. These blessings of assurance are not granted to the few only, but are the privilege of all saints. Paul affirmed: "I know whom I have believed and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day." 2 Tim. 1: 12. John says: "Beloved now are we the sons of God." 1 John 3: 2. We could multiply these passages many times. Therefore the Scripture testimony on the attainment of assurance is plain and abundant. It is inculcated by precept, and supported by example. Like all gospel privileges, assurance is only attained in part by the majority of Christians. That it is attainable by all should stimulate to a full possession. Acts 17: 31. 1 Thes. 1: 5. Isa. 33: 17. 1 John 3: 19. John 14: 13.

## (3) HOW MAY WE ATTAIN UNTO ASSURANCE—HOW ENLARGED WITHIN US THIS JOYFUL GRACE?

Like all divine favors it may be had for the asking. "If any man lack wisdom (assurance) let him ask of God," James 1: 5. But assurance, like happiness, is not to be found in the concrete. Assurance is the resultant of faith and obedience—of love to God and man. Mr. Wesley records, "that when he was enabled to believe in Christ as his Saviour, under the reading of Luther's Preface to the Epistle of St. Paul to the Romans, at about a quarter before nine, in Aldergate street, that he felt his heart so strangely warmed within him, that he felt he did trust Christ alone for salvation and then and there assurance was given him that Jesus had taken away all his sins." Owen says: "First exercise faith on the forgiveness of God; and when the soul is fixed therein, it will have a ground and foundation whereon it may stand securely in making application of assurance to itself." It is folly for one to labor to come to assurance in himself who never believed the forgiveness of God. Let the Christian but bestir himself in the way of seeking God's glory and honor in the daily life, and God the Holy Ghost will work in him a good degree of the joy of assurance.

Heb. 10: 22. 2 Peter 1: 10. Heb. 6: 10. James 1: 5, 6. Matt. 7: 7-11.

## (4) ASSURANCE INTERMITTENT.

Spiritually as well as naturally the sun is not always visible in the sky, nor is calmness always upon the sea. Some of the most holy and devout souls have lived much of their time under a cloud, and many have gone up to heaven in a kind of mist. There are many Christians who have but little of the joy of assurance in the daily life. Their sunshine is only through the rift in the cloud—they indeed "walk by faith and not by sight." David had lost his assurance when he prayed: "Restore unto me, the joy of Thy Salvation." This month of February shows no foliage upon the trees but the possibilities of foliage are within and above—wait until the showers of April, and the sunshine of May, have come upon field, tree, and cloud, then the buds will burst, the leaves appear, and blossoms will again send forth a sweet fragrance over hill and dale. Let the sunshine and showers of Grace fall upon the believer, and, soon he will have occasion to say with Jacob—"Surely God was in this place and I knew it not."

The loss of assurance may arise (1.) By wrong or too small ideas of the work of Christ on our behalf. (2.) By cherished sins—"Christian lost his roll in the armour as he slept." (3.) By brooding over sins that have long been forgiven. (4.) By failure to use the Christian privileges. (5.) Because we did not guard and cherish assurance when we had it. (6.) The lusts of the flesh and the pride of life will soon grieve and drive out this tender grace of assurance. (7.) Ill health, a fit of the "blues," will turn God into a monster and blot out every hope of heaven.

Cure: Study the law of opposites—"right about face" fix the mind on the mercy of God in Christ, stand your ground—"having done all to stand. Stand therefore having your loins girt about with truth"—your sky will clear, your lost assurance will be found.

## (5) THE FRUITAGE OF ASSURANCE

We will name the following as some of the choice fruits of assurance—you can add to the list—"ad infinitum."

(a) Joy: There is a joy of salvation which belongs to the Christian—seek it. For assurance kindles the spirit of praise and fans the flame of joy.

(b) Usefulness: The stream cannot run higher than the fountain head. We can only lead as far as we have gone. The soul that lacks assurance cannot lead another thither.

(c) Holiness: There is a mock holiness abroad in the land, but despise not the genuine coin because the counterfeit is out. Let us seek after that genuine unobtrusive holiness that dwelt so richly in Christ. It is one of the fruits of assurance.

May these and other fruits of assurance so abound in our hearts that we will be able to sing with the spirit and the understanding—

"Blessed assurance Jesus is mine,  
O what a foretaste of glory divine!  
Heirs of salvation, purchase of God,  
Born of his spirit, washed in his blood,  
This is my story, this is my song,  
Praising my Saviour all the day long."  
G. R. WHITE.

P. S.—DEAR UNITONERS:—This "lesson" ends my task. I am debtor to you—accept thanks—Have I helped any one? Such "assurance" would be an added joy. Which lesson most?  
G. R. WHITE.